



Pets on parade helped the “Let’s Talk” program to continue and allowed canines to strut their stuff!

On Sunday, August 27, the Centro di Barrio Simon Antonio was host to some of the handsomest and best-dressed inhabitants of Aruba. They may have walked on four legs, but that did not stop them from displaying ingenious outfits that likely won’t set any trends, but provided memorable moments.

The dog show that was conducted by Aruba’s police under the direction of Deputy Commissioner of Police Trudy Hassel had a multi-purpose. Not only aimed at funding the “Let’s Talk” program for Aruba’s youth, it provided an entertaining day of community involvement for islanders, allowed pet owners to show their love for their canines, and promoted awareness against animal abuse, and the proper treatment of pets. The words, “Let’s Talk” became an acronym for **L**oving **E**very dog you see; **T**aking care of them the **S**ame way you would like to be treated, and then **T**ake **A**ction; **L**et animal abusers **K**now you disapprove! Assisting Officer Hassel in this were Vianney Coffie and Nico Hessing with his daughter Katyuska of the K-Nine Corp and experienced dog show judge Pedro Barrios.

Various breeds and Aruba’s local mixed breed, dubbed “cunucu dogs” were lead around the community center’s patio, to the appreciation and applause of the community, but the highlight of the day was an all-breed competition for the “Best Dressed Dog.” Not only canines, but on one occasion the owner too made a fashion statement, both dressed in the garb of the movie “Men in Black.” Chrisma Flemming and her dog Jinx, a pug just as was in the MIB movies walked away with several trophies, including “Best Formal Dress” and taking second place was Theshwin Tromp and his chihuahua Pinkie who was, as to be expected, Pretty in Pink.

Other dog fanciers taking trophies were young Lynn Demiranda with her West Highland Terrier Lizzie, who created a “buzz” with the audience, and Gerlinda Duplisse with her Jack Russell Terriers Trixie and Spot that captured the “most popular” trophy, as everyone loves a bride and groom! Taking the big trophy for top over all winners were the Black Labrador and Golden Retriever puppies Queen Sheba and Princess Leia, owned by Tito Laclé and Lisa Grell. Not only were they adorable in their sporty outfits, but their sweet natures won over the crowd and judges as well.

The final exhibition for the day was a demonstration by Coffie and Hessing of the K-nine Corp in how well they train their guard dogs. Vianney Coffie played the attacker who could not get their German Shepard to release until ordered to do so by Nico Hessing. His daughter, Katyuska fearlessly demonstrated how the dogs will never attack a child, but can differentiate and stop someone that is molesting a child when it sees it. It was an impressive display of canine intelligence and cooperation with their human trainers. In fact, all the dogs that day were remarkably well behaved, spending a day in peaceful co-existence with their canine companions, and setting a good example for all that attended of living in peace with other members of your species, a lesson that humans would do well to emulate.